



IMPACT REPORT

2023



We are a global impact organisation with an international team of passionate experts based in Amsterdam. We empower industries, cities and nations with practical and scalable solutions to put the circular economy into action.

Our vision is an economic system that ensures the planet and all people can thrive. To avoid climate breakdown, our goal is to double global circularity by 2032.

A DECADE OF **IMPACT**

**We have directly supported,
across 6 continents:**



150

Businesses

through our Business Scan



55+

Cities

completed the Circle
City Scan



27+

Nations

with benchmarking
and policy support

**And been a leader in scaling
the movement:**



5,000+

Case studies
collected

on the Knowledge Hub; the
world's largest open source
online collection



4,200+

People trained

in circular economy principles



5

Digital
products

in the past 4 years alone



800+

Official
citations

since 2012



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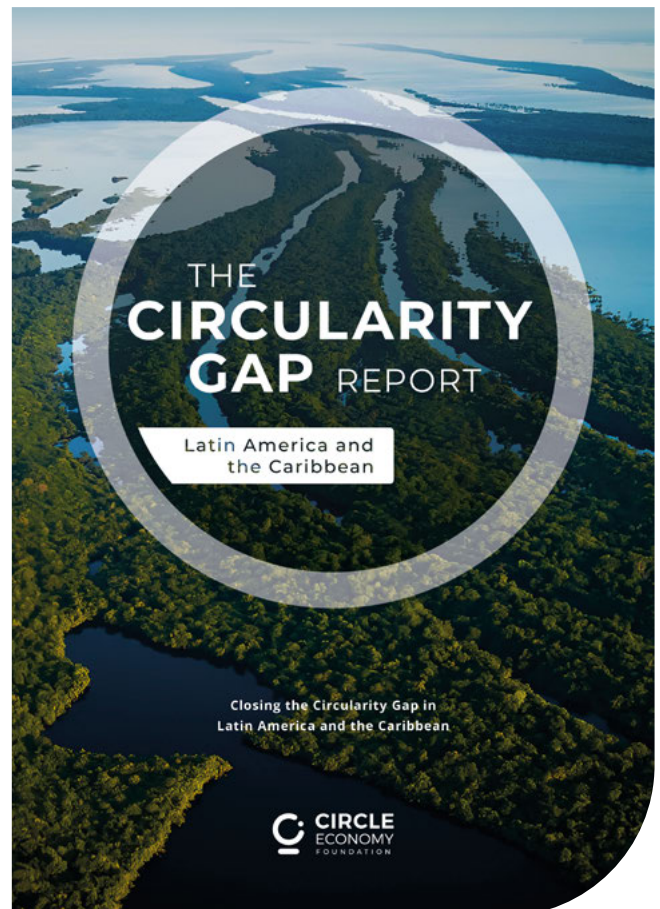
A LETTER FROM OUR CEO

2023 has seen the highest of highs and the lowest of lows—literally. Alongside record-breaking temperatures, we’re surpassing catastrophic tipping points and climate records that have planet Earth reeling. Kicking off the year at the World Economic Forum in Davos, the *Circularity Gap Report 2023* revealed that global circularity has dropped to only 7.2%—meaning 92.8% of materials flowing through the global economy every year come from virgin sources. The summer that followed was Earth’s hottest since global **records** began: exceptional heat swept across much of the world, exacerbating deadly wildfires in Canada and Hawaii and record-breaking ocean warming fueling floods and hurricanes worldwide. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), we are on the path to more than 3-degrees of warming, while biodiversity has dropped by 69% in the last half-century.

While this year’s lows gave many of us cause for pause, Circle Economy Foundation also experienced great highs as we continued scaling our efforts globally to accomplish our mission of doubling global circularity in the next decade. Our research shows that by implementing just 16 circular solutions across key systems, **Food, the Built Environment, Mobility and Manufactured Goods**, we can cut material extraction by one-third, heal ecosystems across land, sea and air, limit global warming to the Paris Agreement’s target of well below 2-degrees, and support a just transition for existing workers and people. It is now our focus to turn these findings into reality.

To do so, our work is guided by our Theory of Change, which lays out our vision to Analyse, Act and Scale:

- In a fitting example of **Analyse** to build an evidence base, our Circularity Gap Reporting Initiative turned its gaze toward the Global South. The *Circularity Gap Report Latin America and the Caribbean* provided the first of its kind analysis in the region, finding that 40% of the region’s raw materials are exported—revealing the disparity between global material demand and local communities that bear the brunt of ecological breakdown. This year also saw the launch of the *Circularity Gap Report for Cities*, bringing the *Circularity Gap Report* to the local level: Munich was up first, demonstrating it can use 43% less materials than it uses now while cutting its consumption-based CO₂ emissions by 23%, with many more to follow.



- To **Act** and turn theory into action, we developed a training programme with Oxfam to build the capacity of small- and medium-sized enterprises towards a green and circular economy. Our circular training model has so far been implemented across several countries: Nigeria, Egypt, Uganda, Somaliland, Kenya and Cambodia. At the World Circular Economy Forum (WCEF) in June 2023, we gathered directors of leading MDBs from all continents—the African Development Bank (AfDB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the European Investment Bank (EIB), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), IDB Invest, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank—making us the first party ever to bring these actors together to speak on the topic of circularity.
- To **Scale** and create global impact, we have finalised our spin-off, Circle Economy Consulting. We have also partnered with US-based Regeneration VC to help drive impact investing in the Netherlands and will be uncovering the most impactful Dutch consumer climate tech businesses and scaling them globally. We have also been building capacity across key value chains via the UN-led SWITCH to Circular Economy Value Chains programme and our acquisition of Sustainability Games—an educational tool for teaching circular principles. Sustainability Games was implemented by plastics companies in Morocco and textiles companies in Bangladesh via SWITCH to educate and inform workers on the ground.

Ultimately, we are not moving fast enough to cut carbon emissions and fulfil people’s needs within the healthy boundaries of the planet. But there are solutions at hand and we are uniquely placed to ensure decision-makers innovate fast. Entering into 2024, we are optimistic thanks to people like you. We will be unveiling our *Circularity Gap Report 2024* at the start of the year to guide policymakers and businesses in making the global circular economy a reality. This report offers much-needed insight into the effects of circularity on providing safe livelihoods, providing new perspectives on how the circular economy can usher in a safer and more just future for everyone. In the meantime, we hope you’ll be inspired by the achievements of just 60 people in the heart of Amsterdam by reading our Impact Report 2023.



Martijn Lopes Cardozo

CEO Circle Economy

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ANALYSE TO BUILD AN EVIDENCE BASE

To achieve our goal of an inclusive society that enables all people and the planet to thrive, we work to build a compelling evidence base that illustrates the power of the circular economy to create a safe and just world. Our analysis has had a far-reaching impact this year as we expand our horizons across the globe. These resources provide decision-makers all over the world with an understanding of how circular their local economy is. They build evidence for circularity that is structured in a way that identifies and prioritises inclusive circular strategies.

MEASURING GLOBAL CIRCULARITY IN OUR ANNUAL *CIRCULARITY GAP REPORT*

For six years, Circle Economy Foundation has tracked the state of global circularity and inspired change with replicable case studies in our *Circularity Gap Reports*. For the first time since the launch of our flagship report, we collaborated with Deloitte on the *Circularity Gap Report 2023* to explore tangible solutions that can be implemented across the private and public sectors.

IMPACT:

The *Circularity Gap Report 2023* found that global circularity has now fallen to 7.2%, down from 9.1% only six years ago. The report outlines how 16 circular solutions implemented across four global systems—Food, the Built Environment, Mobility and Manufactured Goods—can reverse planetary overshoot and limit global warming to within 2-degrees. To date, the report has been downloaded over 15 thousand times. The global *Circularity Gap Report* continues to provide the world with a baseline measurement of circularity—giving us a starting point for the circular transition.



THE CIRCULARITY GAP REPORT

2023

SUCCESS STORY SPOTLIGHT

The circle economy takes root in Austrian policy

The [Circularity Gap Report Austria](#), developed together with Altstoff Recycling Austria, was presented to the Austrian Ministry of Environment in 2019. The report fueled a wider discussion and, four years later, has contributed to the country's recent policy changes. At the end of 2022, the Austrian Cabinet of Ministers adopted a [National Circular Economy Strategy](#). The comprehensive policy document sets the goal of boosting circularity from 9.7% to 18% by 2030. This is one of our many success stories published on [our blog](#).

SUCCESS STORY SPOTLIGHT

Circularity Gap Report Northern Ireland supports circular strategy

Northern Ireland set the ambitious target to reduce its material footprint to eight tonnes per person by 2050. To help it pinpoint this goal, Circle Economy Foundation worked with Northern Ireland on its [Circularity Gap Report Northern Ireland](#) published in June 2022. In January 2023, Northern Ireland included our report in their public consultation draft of the [Circular Economy Strategy for Northern Ireland](#), which will inform the creation of their future circular strategy. This draft strategy prioritises building resilience to economic shocks, such as the current cost of living crisis. It will support innovation that will drive responsible growth, and reduce waste and carbon emissions.

Endorsement from Circularity Gap Report 2023



'Humanity has to learn to live within planetary boundaries. When we decouple economic growth from resource use, prevent and reduce waste, use recycled materials instead of primary raw materials and boost circular business models, we can do it. By making our economy fully circular, we create new jobs, accelerate innovation, and at the same time fight the climate and biodiversity crises. With the Green Deal, Europe is now leading the circularity transition. But we challenge others to beat us: in the race to save the future of humanity, there can only be winners. The Circularity Gap Report 2023 is a call to action for all parts of the world and a great source of inspiration for everyone who's ready to build the economy of tomorrow. The future economy is circular!'

Frans Timmermans, Former Vice President, European Commission

MEASURING REGIONAL CIRCULARITY IN OUR CIRCULARITY GAP REPORT LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

As the environmental impacts of overconsumption disproportionately affect communities in the Global South, there is an urgent need to support emerging economies in their development of circular economy models. For example, Latin America and the Caribbean provide 11% of the world's raw materials, yet represent only 8% of the global population. The [*Circularity Gap Report Latin America and the Caribbean \(LAC\)*](#), launched in October 2023, is the first-ever benchmarking of circularity in the region. Until now, there has been no understanding of the region's baseline level of circularity. This project provides decision-makers and stakeholders with evidence to support shared goal-setting and coordinated action toward the implementation of circular economy roadmaps.

IMPACT:

In partnership with the UN Environment Programme, the UN Industrial Development Organisation, the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Invest, Circle Economy Foundation authored the report and managed stakeholder participation. The report compiled a broad evidence base evaluating the current state of circular economy performance

at the LAC regional level—while also bringing attention to common data gaps that may prevent circular action in the region. The scope of opportunities (such as potential economic benefits, competition, specialisation and labour market) and the barriers to achieving them were established. The project produced one Circularity Gap Report in Spanish and English, six case studies, three coalition roundtables with leaders across the public and private sphere in LAC, three scientific committee meetings and an interactive website in Spanish and English.



IMPACT TESTIMONIAL

'The *Circularity Gap Report Latin America and the Caribbean* is a pivotal milestone, offering an in-depth exploration of the region's prospects and hurdles in the circular economy...The *Circularity Gap Report LAC* enhances awareness about the circular economy's benefits for sustainable progress and provides actionable recommendations for entities ranging from policymakers to businesses, facilitating their transition into this economic model. Moreover, the report fosters regional dialogue and cooperation...Utilising its insights, UNIDO can sculpt interventions tailored to the region's unique challenges and advocate for circular economy policies, further facilitating sustainable development endeavours.'



**Manuel Albaladejo, UNIDO
Representative for the Regional
Office of Argentina, Chile,
Paraguay and Uruguay**

IMPACT TESTIMONIAL

'The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and IDB Invest recognize the groundbreaking significance of the *Circularity Gap Report Latin America and the Caribbean*, viewing it as a foundational document for shaping future projects, policies and regulations that will propel the region's transition towards a circular economy. As direct beneficiaries, governments and the private sector across the region can leverage this evidence to strategically allocate resources towards specific economic sectors that hold immense potential for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and fostering job creation, while steering the region to a circular economy.'

Building on the insights of the CGR LAC, the IDB and IDB Invest will continue to actively partner with regional stakeholders to transform key opportunity sectors, such as agrifood, manufacturing, and waste management. By providing targeted financial and technical assistance, we aim to unlock investments, drive innovation, and increase capacities in the region, ultimately paving the way toward a circular economy future for Latin America and the Caribbean.'



**Natalia Espinola, Representative
of Inter-American Development
Bank**

CONTINUING OUR WORK IN THE NORDICS: THE CIRCULARITY GAP REPORT DENMARK

The Circularity Gap Report Denmark found that the country is only 4% circular with Danes consuming 24.5 tonnes of virgin materials per person per year, much higher than what is deemed sustainable. The baseline results were complemented by an exploration of how various circular strategies could impact the economy. The results showed that these strategies could almost double circularity and subsequently cut the material and carbon footprint nearly in half.

IMPACT:

The report launch was held at the Danish Parliament (The Folketing) in August 2023 and was attended by the Danish Minister of Environment, Magnus Heunicke, alongside a public exhibition of the Circularity Metric. The Report was commissioned by a consortium of Danish institutions: the Danish Industry Foundation, Danish Society of Engineers, Confederation of Danish Industry, Danish Technological Institute, Technical University of Denmark, Danish Design Centre, and Lifestyle & Design Cluster. Since publication, these newly formed coalitions, equipped with the report results, have continued to take action on the ground to dive deeper into specific sectors and strategies.

IMPACT TESTIMONIAL

'The *Circularity Gap Report Denmark*, initiated by a local consortium of Danish organisations, has sparked interest in circularity among Danish politicians, businesses, and the general public. The report's main message was that, despite many in Denmark thinking of us as a green pioneer, we are not as climate and environmentally friendly as many believe—our economy is only 4% circular. Many were surprised to learn that each Dane consumes 24.5 tonnes of virgin materials per year. The report serves as a new reference point, drawing attention from various media outlets. At the launch event in front of the Danish Parliament, about 60 newspapers covered the occasion. We've also received significant interest from business actors eager to learn more about the report's conclusions and how to become more circular. We've been invited to speak at numerous events and have workshops planned for businesses. Additionally, there is a plan for political follow-up, and efforts are underway to determine how we can measure Danish circularity in the future.'



**Sine Beuse Fauerby, Chief
Political Consultant at IDA**

THE CIRCULARITY GAP REPORT

Denmark

THE CANADIAN CIRCULAR CITIES AND REGIONS INITIATIVE

In March 2021, the Canadian Circular Cities and Regions Initiative (CCRI) was launched to empower local governments to progress on the transition towards a circular economy. Ten small and big cities have now engaged in an action-planning process led by Circle Economy Foundation. Yorktown, Pinawa, Kelowna, Chibougamau, Peterborough, Squamish, Peel, Granby Guelph and Outremont have received workshops and training on Circular Economy opportunities and concrete agenda-setting in their respective context. The resulting Community Reports equip local governments with tools and knowledge to accelerate in their circular transition.

IMPACT:

Each community was able to identify at least two tangible opportunities, identifying crucial factors for their development. These prospects ranged from community environmental days in Pinawa to incorporating circular criteria into new construction standards in Kelowna. In order to accommodate the different stages of cities' circular journeys, Circle Economy Foundation adapted the workshops case-by-case. Some further outcomes were a Local Implementation Framework for Outremont, a Connecting Roadmap to Action for Squamish and an Internal Transition Strategy for Wellington and Guelph.

IMPACT TESTIMONIAL

In Spring 2023, Circle Economy worked with the Canadian Circular Cities and Regions Initiative (CCRI) to implement 10 full-day workshops with Canadian municipalities and regions, ranging in size from small villages to major metropolitan regions. Focused on bringing together stakeholders from different departments and political offices, the workshops helped Canadian communities understand the challenges faced in becoming more circular and identify potential action areas to advance locally.

Circle Economy provided expert insight to each community following the workshop, emphasizing areas of opportunity, and providing concrete examples from Europe and other Canadian communities on approaches to overcoming barriers. These workshops provided a rare and effective space for collaboration and collective problem solving across different departments.

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities



TACKLING THE FASHION WASTE MOUNTAIN IN INDIA WITH CIRCLE ECONOMY FOUNDATION METHODOLOGY

Today, vast quantities of textile waste in India are lost to landfills and incinerators—or processed by informal workers, who often experience unjust working conditions. To tackle textile waste in the country, Circle Economy Foundation partnered with Sattva Consulting to translate the Business Case Assessment Framework—previously only applied in Europe—to the Indian context. Data was collected from pilot partners in sorting and waste management and sorting technology providers to compare three scenarios: manual processing, semi, and fully automated processing, with each generating a range of implications for employment, skills needs and investment costs. Using methodology co-created with Fashion for Good, Circle Economy Foundation's analysis highlights the necessary next steps to boost textile recycling in India.

IMPACT:

The outcome of this project—a chapter in the Waste in Wealth report, part of the [Fashion for Good India Toolkit](#) published in December 2023—will give investors and other stakeholders the clear overview needed to tackle sorting challenges. It's hoped that projects such as this will allow stakeholders to make informed decisions, and potentially influence the Indian Ministry of Textiles, other government stakeholders, trade organisations, global impact investors and venture builders, and waste traders, sorters and recyclers.

IMPACT TESTIMONIAL

Given the substantial volume of post-consumer waste generated annually in India, it was essential to assess viable business opportunities for establishing sorting facilities and reintegrating this waste into the supply chain. Leveraging insights from Circle Economy's work in the EU, the collaborative efforts of CE and Sattva Consulting culminated in a robust model tailored for India. This model not only serves as a foundational framework for the establishment of sorting centres in India, but also facilitates meaningful comparisons between the Indian and EU ecosystems and helps us understand the macro picture of post-consumer waste sortation using cutting-edge technologies. The findings presented in this report are instrumental in propelling the development of sorting infrastructure in India



Priyanka Khanna,
Innovation Director - Scaling,
Fashion for Good

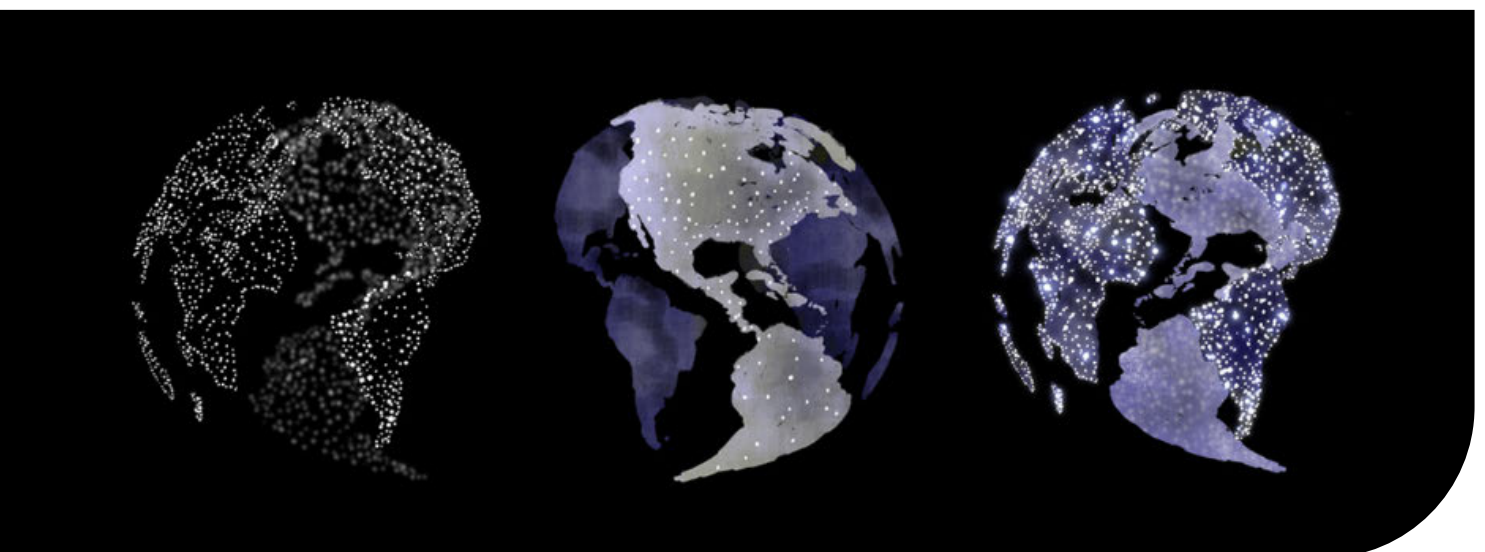


MAPPING CIRCULAR TEXTILE INITIATIVES IN 3D

This year, Circle Economy Foundation teamed up with World Circular Textiles Day (WCTD) and creative innovation studio Holition to create a 3D globe visual, portraying a dynamic and vibrant global map of efforts in circular textiles. [The Global Mapping Project 3D Visualisation](#) depicts the diverse and already substantial efforts towards a circular textile industry, visualising the collective progress that has been made, and casting a light on areas that need further attention and development.

IMPACT:

Circle Economy Foundation was the Global Mapping Project initiator and facilitator: collecting data from 634 case studies of circular textiles activity captured by a team of 84 mappers across 74 countries to map circular textiles activity worldwide. The visualisation was unveiled at WCTD 2023 in London, where a panel of experts from various parts of the textile value chain discussed key challenges. This collaboration was able to bring to life the spirit of WCTD's bold vision, uniquely depicting the motivation and teamwork required to achieve the goal of full circularity by 2050.



3

ACT TO TURN THEORY INTO ACTION

Building an evidence base for the circular economy is a solid start, but it's also important to translate evidence into action. This year, we've worked hard to transform our research and analysis into practical, on-the-ground solutions for circularity. But we know we can't do this alone: that's why a key part of our strategy has been to build capacity amongst stakeholders, by developing trainings and tools that can be used to spread circular initiatives across the globe.



SUCCESS STORY SPOTLIGHT

The circular economy lands on the desks of policymakers across Europe

This year, we were proud to see so much of our work directly influencing policy across Europe and the UK. For one, the Dutch Ministry for Environment introduced our [Circular Finance Roadmap](#) at the [March 2023 EU Council meetings](#) on Climate and Energy Diplomacy, urging the council to make financial flows consistent with the Paris Agreement. Meanwhile, in Spain, Circle Economy Foundation published '[Transitioning towards a circular tourism system in the Balearic Islands](#)' (Ibiza, Mallorca, Menorca, Formentera). The report will inform the upcoming development of a [circular strategy](#) and was endorsed by the former president of the region. Similarly, Scotland introduced its [Circular Economy Bill](#) in 2023. Our partners at [Zero Waste Scotland](#) were consulted by the Scottish Parliament on the bill after publishing our [Circularity Gap Report Scotland](#) in 2022.

THE CIRCULAR EXCHANGE NETWORK BRINGS MULTILATERAL DEVELOPMENT BANKS TOGETHER FOR THE FIRST TIME

For the circular transition to get off the ground at scale, finance is critical—but a lack of alignment between key actors muddies the waters. This year, Circle Economy Foundation set up the Circularity Exchange Network (CEN) to facilitate alignment between Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) around the world, encouraging action on circularity through targeted investment and enabling cross-border collaboration. Marking a huge win for Circle Economy Foundation as well as the Dutch government, we gathered directors of leading MDBs from all continents at the World Circular Economy Forum (WCEF) in May 2023—crowning us the first party ever to bring these actors together to speak on the topic of circularity. Following this success, Circle Economy Foundation was appointed to assist the EIB in its role as Secretariat of the MDB Circular Economy Working Group.

IMPACT:

Due to this initiative, the African Development Bank (AfDB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the European Investment Bank (EIB), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), IDB Invest, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank acknowledged the importance of the circular economy transition in combating planetary crises, and have come together to work together for the two coming years. This group represents an investment potential of more than €800 billion. After in-depth and inspiring discussions, the directors committed to working together via the Circularity Exchange Network—an initiative of Circle Economy and the Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management. This meeting was able to take place largely due to the success of our Circular Finance Roadmap for MDBs, launched at COP27. The Network aims to overhaul the circular economy's image in the financial sector, presenting it as a cross-cutting approach to meet the various objectives of sustainable development while harmonising circular metrics and indicators and building greater awareness of circular business models among MDBs.



HELPING CIRCULAR BUSINESS MODELS ACHIEVE SUCCESS

Circle Economy Foundation formed the Coalition Circular Accounting (CCA) in 2020 to tackle accounting-related challenges slowing the circular transition. The Coalition, a diverse group of experts in the financial, accounting and legal fields, includes InvestNL, NBA, ABN AMRO, Alfa Accountants en Adviseurs, the Sustainable Finance Lab, the Impact Economy Foundation, Avans Hogeschool, Nyenrode Business Universiteit, Copper8 Deloitte. Through its research, the CCA aims to provide financial institutions and policymakers with fact-based information on circular accounting challenges needed to spur real change.

IMPACT:

This year's projects shed light on some of these challenges: [**Making Cycling Circular: The Case of Swapfiets**](#) details how the current tax landscape and traditional accounting practices restrict the success of circular Product-as-a-Service business models, for example, while our work with [**Hempel**](#) provided businesses with a step-by-step guide for businesses to prepare for upcoming circular economy reporting requirements. This research is already prompting further action: the CCA now aims to send an open letter to the Dutch tax office, advocating for changes in tax regulation to reduce barriers for circular businesses. Past work is also still having an impact today: following research collaboration in December 2017, Netherlands-based mobile company Fairphone has launched a Product-as-a-Service offering directly in line with the recommendations in the report.



SHAPING A HARMONISED INDICATORS LANDSCAPE WITH THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY INDICATORS COALITION

The Platform for Accelerating the Circular Economy (PACE) and Circle Economy Foundation have established the Circular Economy Indicators Coalition (CEIC) to drive the harmonisation and increased application of circular indicators, with the ultimate aim of increasing the use of employment-related indicators. We cannot manage the circular transition if we do not measure its progress and impact on the labour market!

IMPACT:

Circle Economy Foundation is acting as a facilitator to connect key initiatives and stakeholders, enabling knowledge exchange, improving alignment and bridging key gaps in the field. Its ultimate tool was delivered this year: the [Circular Economy Indicators Library](#), a digital platform providing an overview of the latest indicators, methodologies and associated resources to measure the circular economy and its related social, economic and environmental impacts. The CEIC also provided 30+ stakeholders—including Eurostat, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training and OECD—with a space to share learning and challenges related to measuring employment-related to the circular economy.



Explore



Case studies and reports

Business cases, policy cases, reports and articles



Indicators

A library of circularity indicators to measure the progress and impact of ...



Key elements of the circular ...

Circle Economy's framework of strategies and activities that defin ...



Policies

A framework of policy instruments that enable and stimulate the ...



Sustainable Development ...



SUCCESS STORY SPOTLIGHT

From theory to action: influencing the Nordics financial roadmap

Many financial market participants are becoming interested in circular investments—but may be at a loss as to first steps. Templates can help relevant stakeholders with their initial attempts at creating new financial products or assessment methods. This is why Circle Economy Foundation, in collaboration with Circular Finance Lab, has created due diligence templates for a variety of financial products—specifically debt and equity capital—aiming to invest in circular economy solutions. Previous work conducted for this collaboration has also inspired policy: the Nordic Roadmap for Circular Financing, for example, which is charting a new path towards sustainable financing for circular business models.



CIRCULARITY GAMES TRANSLATES KNOWLEDGE INTO ACTION

This year, Circle Economy Foundation acquired Sustainability Games—a gamified e-learning platform that addresses the green skills gap: the need for more professionals to fulfil the rapidly growing demand for circular jobs. The Sustainability Games platform, combined with Circle Economy Foundation’s 12+ years of research and development of circular solutions, delivers a highly flexible and scalable solution to supply knowledge to any changemaker.

IMPACT:

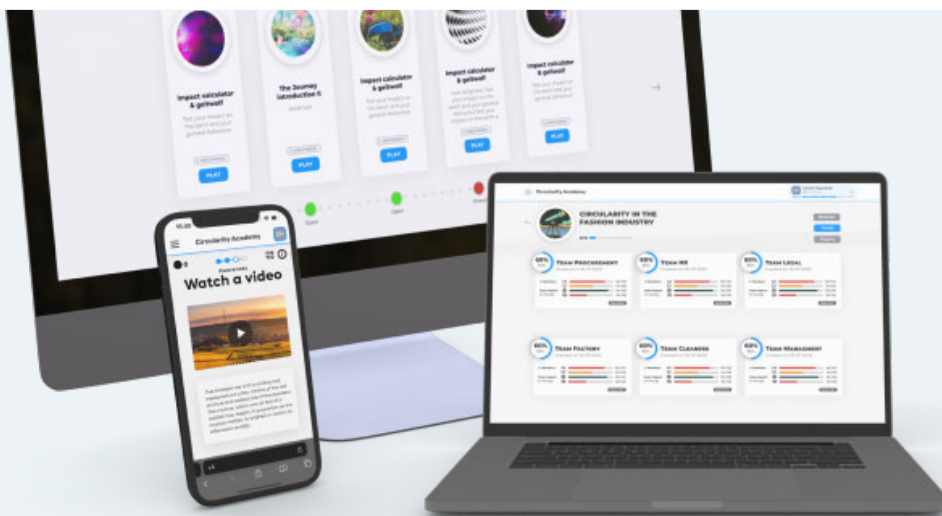
The platform provides a continuous learning experience composed of tracks and minigames—fun and easy yet in-depth. It can assess an organisation or a team and track their progress, raise awareness about the circular economy, help shape collective understanding and develop and certify teams’ skills. Our circular economy experts co-create learning tracks with clients to fine-tune game experiences according to the industry and team specifics. For example, in the Netherlands alone our 2023 partnership with Circulair West delivered a Circular Starter Kit to Dutch SMEs and our collaboration with Uijtjesbureau developed a hybrid corporate event game on circularity. The result is simultaneous education and engagement for hundreds of people—helping close the green skills gap at scale.

IMPACT TESTIMONIAL

‘I’m really happy that we are now part of a much larger impact-driven organisation with a flagship product like the Circularity Gap Report, many sustainability experts’ content and a strong digital mindset. Circle Economy and Sustainability Games were already in strategic partnership and launched the Circularity Academy at Web Summit Lisbon last year. This is simply the next step towards greater impact.’



Ivonne Bojoh, COO & Director Digital at Circle Economy Foundation



BRINGING THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY'S JOBS OPPORTUNITIES TO DECISION-MAKERS IN BRUSSELS, NEW YORK CITY AND DUBAI

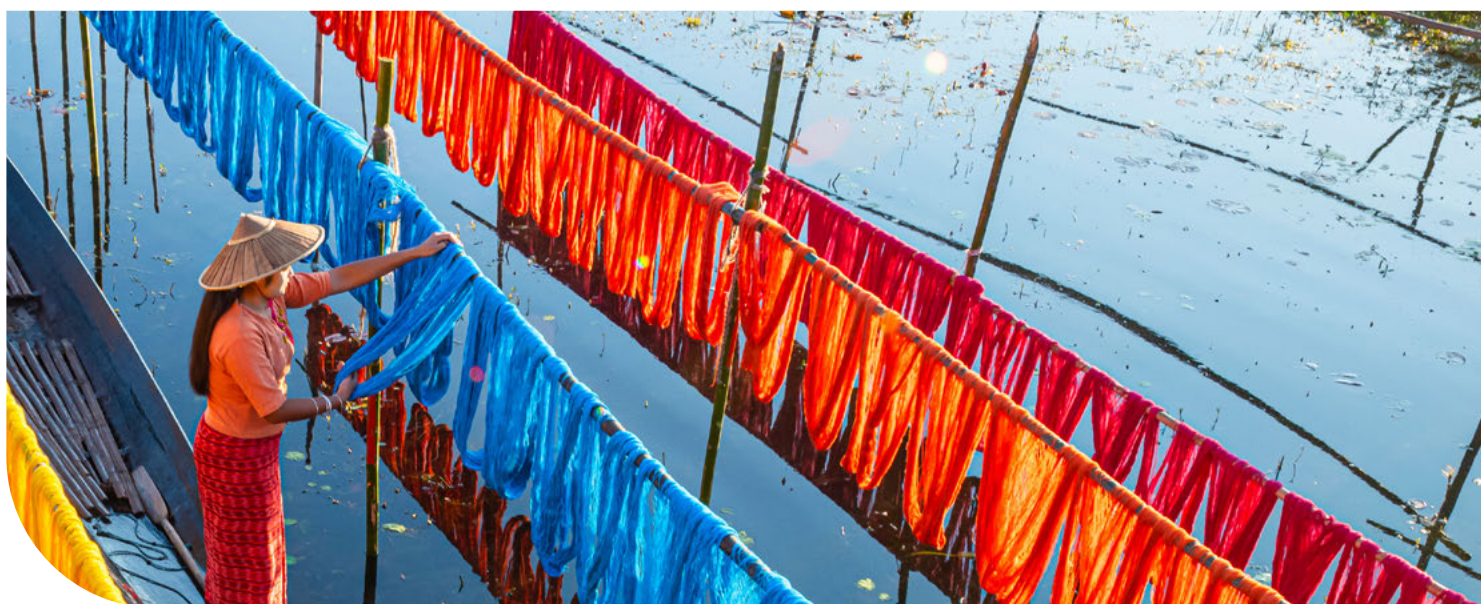
Over the last year, Circle Economy Foundation's Circular Jobs Initiative's (CJI) advocacy activities have brought evidence on the jobs, skills, opportunities and challenges associated with the circular economy into the hands of local and national decision-makers. This has involved several projects, from the creation of a baseline for green jobs in [C40 cities](#) to the launch of [Jobs in the Circular Economy](#), a new joint initiative with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the World Bank, and its accompanying report [Decent Work in the Circular Economy](#). The initiative aims to generate data and evidence that shows how the circular economy can help shape a more just and inclusive world.

IMPACT:

The CJI's work is already making waves, with early results from our collaboration with C40 presented at New York Climate Week to—among others—the City's mayor. Circle Economy Foundation is now working with C40 to release a baseline assessment of green jobs across C40 cities in January 2024. Its network of national governments, statistical bureaus and advocates are increasingly working to embed the social agenda in circular economy policy.

This July also saw the CJI present at the European Parliament, where lead Esther Goodwin Brown shared the social potential of the circular economy—and how to realise this potential, building on the Initiative's years of work in this space.

The Jobs in the Circular Economy initiative has also been presented on a global stage, featuring in discussions at both the World Circular Economy Forum 2023 and COP28. The ILO and World Bank, partners in the initiative, have solidified their commitment to rolling out circular economy initiatives to create better jobs for people working across value chains and regions.



UPLIFTING CIRCULAR BUSINESSES WORLDWIDE THROUGH IN-PERSON TRAININGS

This year saw Circle Economy Foundation extend its impact around the world, with the launch of the [Circularity Services Toolbox](#) to promote the uptake and replication of circular business models. In 2023, the toolbox was implemented through Training of Trainer programmes—facilitated by Circle Economy Foundation in collaboration with Oxfam—in Kenya and Cambodia, joining Egypt, Uganda and Somaliland. The project has built on Circle Economy Foundation’s Workshop Suite, an industry-tested point of reference in supporting enterprises worldwide in transitioning to a circular economy.

IMPACT:

We delivered 14 trainings across six countries to convince businesses of the economic and environmental benefits of circular strategies, with training recipients already putting key takeaways from the trainings into action. Due to the programme’s practical tools, in-person trainings and demonstration of financial gains, participating businesses have now begun to make products from their waste, reorganise their resource management and redesign production

IMPACT TESTIMONIAL

‘Creating circular business opportunities makes business sense. The experience was fantastic. The experience will bring change to the economy.’

Train-the-trainer participant, Nigeria

processes to create more opportunities for recycling. These actions have culminated in the establishment of the Lagos [Circular Business and Community Platform](#), launched in Nigeria this year. The Platform, developed in collaboration with the Consul General of the Netherlands, the Dutch Enterprise Agency and the Lagos State Government, aims to boost circular community development, deliver circular business and incubation services, and shape dialogue around circular policy.



CONTINUED COLLABORATION WITH UNESCO-UNEVOC PROVIDES TRAINING FOR WORKERS LOOKING TO BOOST CIRCULAR SKILLS

Employment opportunities are a concern for rapidly-growing economies, especially for youth. In order to upskill the workforce in disciplines and approaches that can be used to generate new economic activity and resilience, such as the circular economy, training institutions must also be upskilled and supported to integrate these practices into their much-needed performance offerings to their students. Originally forged in 2021, Circle Economy Foundation's partnership with UNESCO-UNEVOC is doing just this: now, our work with educators and graduates from Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions is taking the form of research, awareness-raising, and hands-on training programmes.

IMPACT:

Our collaboration with UNESCO-UNEVOC culminated in a [microlearning programme](#) Discover the Circle Economy: Jobs and Skills in a Non-Linear World, launched in early 2023. This self-paced upskilling training focused on increasing participants' knowledge of the circular economy, particularly in the context of jobs and skills. Over the course of our partnership, we've reached 80 educators across six countries (Ghana, South Africa, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya) through our training of trainers programme, and 255 students across four countries (South Africa, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda) through the microlearning programme.

Following this, Circle Economy Foundation and UNESCO UNEVOC embarked on a new study to assess the capacity of TVET institutions to integrate skills for circular economy professions into their circular. The study identifies capacity gaps that need to be filled in order to arms teachers and students alike with skills to drive the circular economy. It will be released in January 2024!

IMPACT TESTIMONIAL

'The two-day training session was an eye-opening experience for all those in attendance. Despite there being a focus on how the model of a circular economy could be integrated into entrepreneurial learning, it quickly became evident that a circular approach could and should be integrated into all fields if we are truly to become a sustainable society that simultaneously fosters innovation.'



Tracy Khuzwayo, Durban University of Technology (DUT)



SUCCESS STORY SPOTLIGHT

The city of montreal takes steps toward a circular economy roadmap

Montréal has set ambitious goals: becoming a zero waste city by 2030 and being carbon neutral by 2050. To help it get there, Circle Economy Foundation worked with the City of Montréal on a Circle City Scan titled [Circular Montréal: Baseline Assessment](#), published in January 2023. Four sectors will be key: the food system, built environment, textiles and mobility. To guide these four sectors in the right direction, the Circle City Scan outlined eight potential circular actions to guide and inform the City of Montréal in the development of its first Circular Economy Roadmap. Since the report's publication, Montréal has included our research in their public consultation document, ['Towards a Montréal roadmap in the circular economy'](#), which will inform the creation of their future circular strategy.

Cadre stratégique

Vers une feuille de route montréalaise en économie circulaire

Document de consultation publique
Février 2023



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SCALE FOR GLOBAL IMPACT

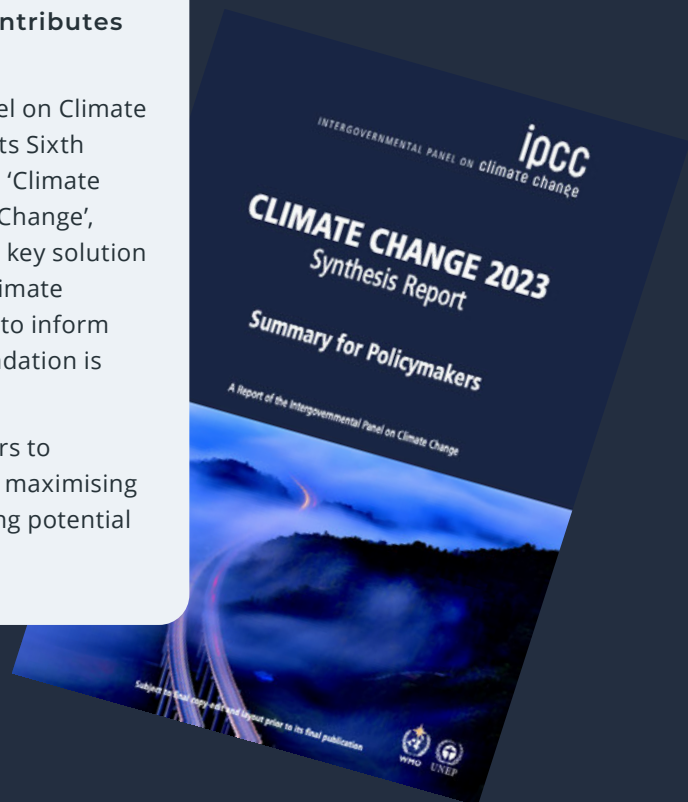
To scale the uptake of circular principles worldwide, it is essential to reach as many people as possible. To this end, Circle Economy Foundation has partnered with over 350 organisations to date to spread the circular economy across every continent. It is our goal that through strategic partnerships and implementation of digital resources, we can facilitate access to knowledge, tools and services to scale the adoption of circular strategies.

SUCCESS STORY SPOTLIGHT

Circle Economy Foundation contributes to latest IPCC report

In 2022, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change published the third part of its Sixth Assessment Report. This part, titled 'Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change', highlights the circular economy as a key solution to manage the negative effects of climate breakdown. Our research was used to inform the report and Circle Economy Foundation is cited as a source.

The report also calls for policymakers to introduce systemic circular policies, maximising emissions reduction while minimising potential rebound effects.



SPIN-OFF CIRCULAR ECONOMY CONSULTING

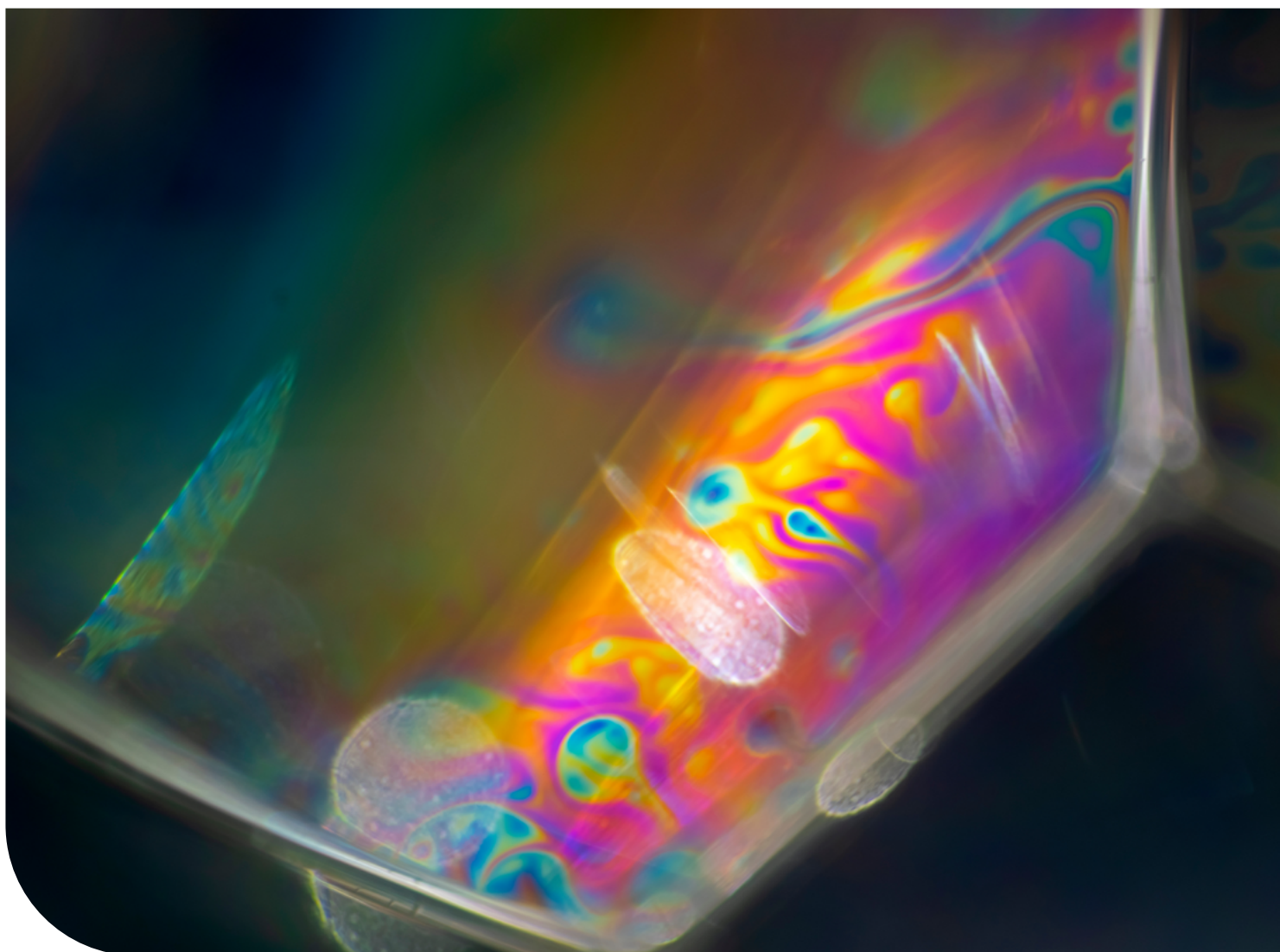
With the circular economy gaining popularity—from national policies and roadmaps to the EU's CSRD—it is clear that businesses will need support in identifying solutions, implementing and measuring circularity in the coming years. For this reason, Circle Economy Consulting was launched as a spin-off of Circle Economy Foundation. Circle Economy Consulting is a dedicated consulting firm that shares our mission to double global circularity by 2032. To do this, the consultancy provides services to accelerate the circular transition within businesses.

IMPACT TESTIMONIAL

'After putting the circular economy on the map as a concept to drive real change, we now need to achieve speed and scale with businesses implementing real solutions. This is an exciting next step both in the history of Circle Economy and for me personally. After more than ten years of building up Circle Economy and bringing expertise to companies, I see this as a natural evolution to bring greater benefits to businesses as they move toward circularity.'



Marc de Wit, CEO of Circle Economy Consulting



PARTNERING WITH REGENERATION VC TO SCALE INNOVATIVE DUTCH START-UPS

Our analysis shows that 70% of global greenhouse gas emissions are associated with material extraction, handling and consumption. Yet global circularity has reached an all-time low of 7.2%. This presents a systems change opportunity to greatly improve circularity in an effort to achieve ambitious climate goals. In an effort to scale Dutch circular economy innovations that are primed to tackle the global climate emergency on the global stage, Circle Economy Foundation and Regeneration.VC have partnered to source best-of-class early-stage Consumer ClimateTech businesses to build a concentrated Dutch portfolio.

IMPACT:

Circle Economy Foundation will leverage its data and insights to provide state-of-the-art circularity impact measurement across the investment portfolio and utilise its unique position within the Netherlands to locate and scale the most promising enterprises. Regeneration.VC will provide due diligence, go-to-market strategy and manage the investment process, while its advisory team of top materials, reuse and consumer experts will further accelerate portfolio opportunities globally.

IMPACT TESTIMONIAL

'In many ways, the Netherlands is leading the world in circularity. From before our inception, Circle Economy Foundation has inspired us to think more quantitatively and thoughtfully about the material flows of companies, cities and countries. It's incredibly exciting for our team to actively collaborate to uncover the best technologies addressing consumer supply chain emissions in the epicentre of circularity. With upcoming EU regulations, there is tremendous innovation and investment happening in the region, and we look forward to bringing it to the US and beyond.'



**Michael Smith, Regeneration.VC,
General Partner**

IMPACT

HOW TO GET FUNDED BY



TEXTILES AND PLASTIC WORKERS TRAINED ON THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY IN MOROCCO AND BANGLADESH

The SWITCH to Circular Economy Value Chains programme, led by UNIDO, in partnership with Chatham House, Circle Economy Foundation and the European Environmental Bureau, supports micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSME) in developing countries that supply materials to large EU manufacturers. The programme helps MSMEs to identify, adopt and excel in circular economy practices. SWITCH supports and facilitates effective and replicable pilot projects that involve all relevant actors across selected value chains and enables enterprises to meet their circularity goals.

IMPACT:

The role of Circle Economy Foundation is to build SWITCH's capacity development programme: consisting of an assessment of circularity knowledge, development of a training curriculum and roll-out of a train-the-trainer programme. Our activities in 2023 focused on the textiles value chain in Bangladesh and plastic packaging in Morocco via the development of [two contextualised Circularity Games](#). Circle Economy Foundation works closely with local partners for the development of the capacity building programme as well as its dissemination. In 2023, Circle Economy Foundation has signed partnership agreements with the Centre Technique de Plasturgie et Caoutchouc (CTPC) in Morocco as well as the Bangladesh Garments Manufacturing and Export Association (BGMEA) and Reverse Resources in Bangladesh.

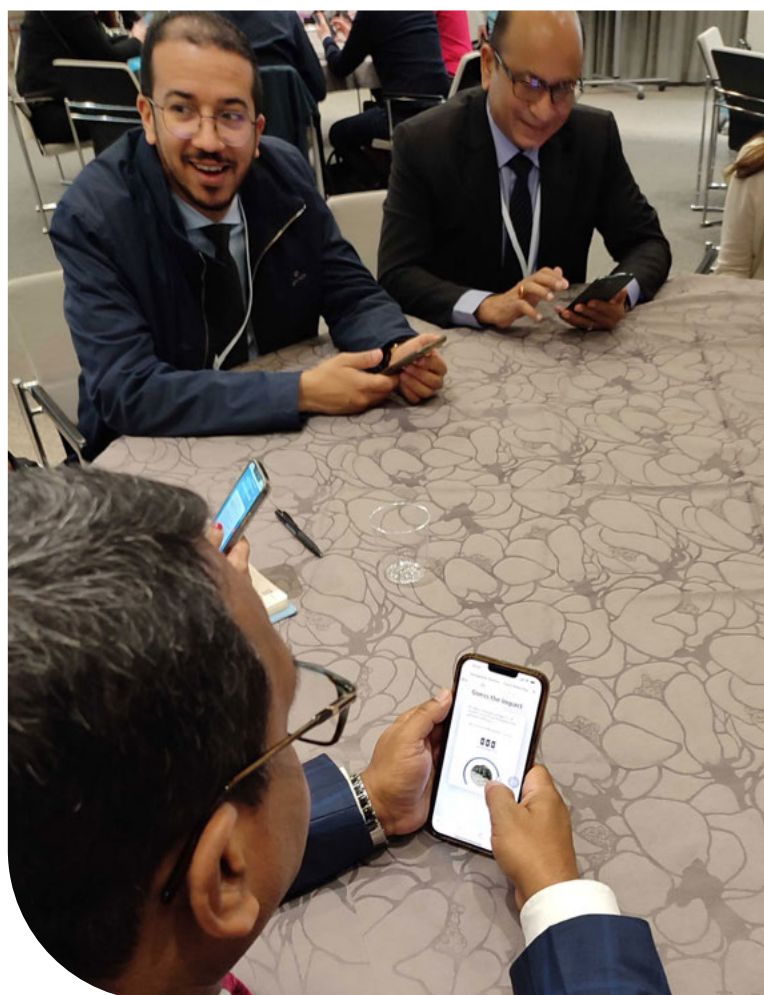
Activities on electronic waste started in Egypt at the end of the year. To date, over 450 stakeholders—including EU, Moroccan and Bangladeshi policymakers—have been trained.

IMPACT TESTIMONIAL

"We are confident that, in collaboration with Circle Economy and its capacity building platform, we can enhance the knowledge and skills of stakeholders to embrace circular practices. The 'Circularity Game' at the 'Switch to Upstream Circularity Dialogue' organized by BGMEA, part of the SWITCH2CE Project by UNIDO, was a highlight. By developing accessible capacity building applications, we aim to scale our efforts, making Bangladesh a global leader in innovative, circular, and sustainable production. This complements our thriving SME industries known for innovative use of materials considered 'waste.'



Vidiya Khan, Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association



BUILT ENVIRONMENT PROFESSIONALS ACROSS EUROPE LEARN CIRCULAR SKILLS VIA GAMIFIED COURSE

The **BUS-GoCircular** project aims to equip the built environment sector with the necessary tools, skills and frameworks for the energy, digital and circular transitions. The overall aim of BUS-GoCircular is to address and overcome demand challenges for a green-energy skilled workforce, along with hands-on capacity building to increase the number of skilled workers across the value chain. BUS-GoCircular will achieve this objective by developing and implementing a circular construction skills qualification framework with a focus on multifunctional green roofs, façades and interior elements.

IMPACT:

As part of the project, Circle Economy Foundation developed a gamified built environment e-learning course, three EU-level train-the-trainer programmes and an EU-level webinar series. To date, we have trained 575 built environment professionals. To further the impact of BUS-GoCircular, we have dispatched our policy briefs to the EU Commission for approval and implementation. To maintain the outcome of the project in developing a circular skill set for youth, women and professionals in the built environment, we designed and rolled out a mentorship programme, train-the-trainer programme and e-learning course. Alongside its partners, the project has so far taken root in the Netherlands, Spain, France, Ireland, Czech Republic, Hungary and Croatia.



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OUR TEAM, LEADERSHIP AND INTERNAL IMPACT

Our team of international experts are united by a common goal: driving the circular transition through a range of unique skills from data analysis, industrial ecology and economics to design, editorial, digital and communications. We are proud to have two of LinkedIn's Top Green Voices sharing our work with their many followers, Vojtech Vosecky and Laxmi Adrianna Haigh, who have a combined following of 92,000 and incredible success amplifying content globally.

Our global team is made up of 27 different nationalities, allowing us to make an impact in priority regions. For example, this June, our Senior Labour Market Consultant, Apoorva Shankar, presented our report, [***Decent Work In A Circular Economy: How To Achieve A Just Transition***](#), at the Bangladesh Circular Economy Summit and the Bangladesh Circular Apparel & Textile Forum. Meanwhile, our Head of Global Value Chains, Hilde van Duijn, joined a lineup of impressive speakers at the Embassy of India in the Netherlands: Joyeeta Gupta, Professor on Environment and Development in the Global South at the University of Amsterdam; Maud de Vries, CEO of BYCS (a Dutch-based NGO supporting urban change via bicycling); Stientje van Veldhoven, Vice President Regional Director Europe WRI. Together, they explored the public and private sector's role in promoting sustainable lifestyles, reducing emissions, conserving resources and protecting the environment.

OUR LEADERSHIP

Our Supervisory Board

Circle Economy Foundation's Supervisory Board are responsible for providing direction and guidance to senior management with respect to the business and activities of Circle Economy Foundation. In 2023, we recruited Jules Kortenhorst to the Board. Jules is the former CEO of Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI), a Postcode Lottery beneficiary and non-profit organisation focusing on clean energy. Before leading RMI, Jules Kortenhorst was the founding CEO of the European Climate Foundation and a member of the Dutch Parliament. With Jules's outstanding track record growing RMI from a 60-person organisation to a 600-plus global powerhouse, we know his expertise will be invaluable in ensuring Circle Economy Foundation can supercharge our mission.

Our Management Team

The Circle Economy Foundation Management Team is responsible for the overall strategy and vision of the organisation and for managing the overall operations. With a diverse, highly experienced global leadership team, Circle Economy Foundation is well-placed to focus on ecosystem building, international scaling and the productisation and digitising of the core service offerings. Under this leadership, we are creating global partnerships and alliances to lead the circular transition and develop new opportunities for innovation, collaboration and positive morale.



Find out about the **Team** behind the Impact

[READ MORE](#)

OUR SUPERVISORY BOARD:

ROBERT-JAN
VAN OGTROP



Founder and Board Chairman of Circle Economy Foundation, Board Member of PACE, 'Going Circular' Executive Producer, Former Board Chairman of African Parks

ANDRIENNE
D'ARENBERG



Executive in Residence at the Oxford Said Business School, Board Member of the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue and Trustee of The EUROPAEUM

PROF. DR. LOUISE E.M.
VET



Emeritus Professor of Evolutionary Ecology, Wageningen University, former Director of the Netherlands Institute of Ecology (NIOO-KNAW)

LORENZO
GRABAU



Technology Investor, Executive Director at Olympia Group, and Senior Advisor at Perella Weinberg and K Group, former CEO of Kinnevik, Global Fashion Group, Rocket Internet and Lazada, Board Member of Millicom, Tele2 and Zalando

JULES
KORTENHORST



Former CEO of Rocky Mountain Institute, Chair of the WEF Global Future Council, former founding CEO of the European Climate Foundation and founding member of the global Energy Transitions Commission

OUR EXECUTIVE BOARD:



MARTIJN **LOPES
CARDOZO**
CEO



HATTY **COOPER**
Director of Governance and
Institutions



IVONNE **BOJOH**
COO and Director Digital

INTERNAL IMPACT

KEY AREA 1: WORK LIFE BALANCE AND ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

Targets	Status update
Structures for supporting staff members with caring responsibilities	Paid and unpaid special leave is available for first and partly second degree family marriages and wedding anniversaries, as well as deaths of family members or close ties. For moving one day of paid leave is granted every 12 months. Maternity and partner leave are governed by Dutch law.
Integration of work with family and personal life	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Part-time and remote working concepts are implemented and used extensively. Agreements form part of the employment contract. Working hours are flexible with a core time to be kept.• Guidelines for work life balance are regularly updated on an intranet page and staff is updated in Monthly meetings. Circle Economy Foundation now has a sabbatical policy.
Raising awareness on gender-bias in the workplace	Gender-sensitive communication training is planned.

KEY AREA 2: GENDER BALANCE IN LEADERSHIP AND DECISION MAKING

Targets	Status update
Structures to support gender equality	GEB was founded by four female champions. Together with implementing and overseeing the Gender Equality Plan, the GEB will assist the organisation in fostering and increasing awareness.
Gender balance in all key leadership and decision-making levels (Director and Senior levels)	Currently our Director level has 3 people. 2 are female. Our senior team has 4 people - 3 are female
Oversight of organisational processes in relation to gender	Principles of inclusion, diversity, and equality are ingrained in strategic planning and governance, and the Management Team receives direction from the GEB.

KEY AREA 3: GENDER EQUALITY IN RECRUITMENT AND CAREER PROGRESSION

Targets	Status update
<p>Organisational recruitment and career progression policies have a view on gender equality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every position will be “advertised” internally during the monthly meetings of the company. We’ve implemented a recruiting advertisement communication template that includes newly additional features for objective language and gender-neutral appeal. • We’ve implemented a recruiting advertisement communication template that includes newly additional features for objective language and gender-neutral appeal.
<p>Gender proofing recruitment processes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The following text is included in all our job advertisements: Circle Economy welcomes applications from all qualified and eligible candidates regardless of sex, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief, marital status or pregnancy and maternity, as governed under our Gender Equality Plan. Circle Economy encourages our candidates to refrain from attaching their profile photos and gender details in their resumes to mitigate any potential subconscious bias. • Templates in place with an additional worksheet for reference included to styleguide.
<p>Career advancement interventions for all CE employees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were 13 promotions in 2023. 85% were females whereas females represent 63% of the total employee population. • Part time working is used extensively in the organisation. 49% of our employees work part time. Of this group 29% are male and 71% are female.
<p>Monitoring of gender pay gaps</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Done on 30 October 2023. The Mean Gender Pay Gap is -2%, the Median Gender Pay Gap is -11.1%. • This means Men on average earn less than females in our organisation.

KEY AREA 4: INTEGRATION OF THE GENDER DIMENSION INTO RESEARCH

Targets	Status update
Encourage women to take up research positions	Among our researchers 40% male, 60% female. Most senior researchers are female
Encourage gender-related topics into research	We work closely with EU-interests in mind, with EU actors, and are funded by the EU on several projects. To this end, multiple projects have added the gender dimension into our research, particularly on topics such as global value chains impact, socioeconomic inclusivity, informality, and the labour market.

KEY AREA 5: MEASURES AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (INCL. SEXUAL HARASSMENT)

Targets	Status update
Create biannual training sessions on sensitive topics	We are in the process of organising events on diversity and gender for raising awareness.
Encourage employees to report any gender-based discrimination, harassment and violence incidents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An external trusted advisor has been appointed via our occupational health service. Employees are reminded about this at appropriate times (for example during onboarding). The contact details to the external confidant are to be found on the intranet. No complaints were made directly to management in the organisation. We are now rolling out our Code of Ethics, which also governs any gender-based discrimination, harassment and violence incidents

INTERESTED IN JOINING **OUR VISION?**

Get in touch with our Research and Development team.

GET IN TOUCH:



Matthew Fraser

Head of Research and Development

matthew@circle-economy.com

 **CONTACT US**

or find out more on our website:

circle-economy.com/impact

circle-economy.com